

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for decreasing the amount of mSREBP mature sterol regulatory element binding proteins and cholesterol synthesis in a human cell characterized by an elevated level of mSREBP mature sterol regulatory element binding proteins comprising contacting the cell with an agent that specifically inhibits *de novo* synthesis of ceramide in the cell, so as to thereby decreasing decrease the amount of mSREBP mature sterol regulatory element binding proteins and cholesterol synthesis in the cell.
- 2-5. (Canceled)
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the cell is a hepatocyte.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the cell is an adipocyte.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the agent specifically inhibits the activity of an enzyme which catalyzes part of the *de novo* ceramide pathway.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the enzyme is serine-palmitoyl transferase or ceramide synthase.
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the

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agent inhibits the expression of an enzyme which catalyzes part of the *de novo* ceramide pathway.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the agent is selected from the group consisting of (a) myriocin; (b) cycloserine; (c) Fumonisin B1; (d) PPMP; (e) compound D609; (f) methylthiodihydroceramide; (g) propanolol; and (h) resvaratrol.

13-49. (Canceled)